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Road to Moloch: The Space of the Colonised as Technologies of Monstrosity

In the wake of the aggressive American reply to 9/11, frequently described as a bid for empire, the Middle Eastern landscape as a form of American colonial space has been imagined in interesting and disturbing ways. This paper discusses the representation of this space by examining the three war films *Red Sands*, *the Objective* and the *Devil's Tomb* all taking place in the American imperial margin. The paper demonstrates how the desert and mountain landscapes in these films are not only perceived as sources of terror in themselves, they also threaten a monstrous transformation of those who enter, turning these spaces into what Judith Halberstam calls technologies of monstrosity. These films are thus perhaps best described as a form of neo-imperial war gothic where the War on Terror, conflated with more deeply rooted, yet fundamentally historical, fears regarding racial, religious, sexual and ethnic transgression, is projected onto the desert landscape of the colonised.